



## SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



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### **Prime Minister underlines the importance of Education in the development of Timor-Leste**

On Monday the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, H.E. Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo delivered a keynote address to the participants of a two-day international conference on “Finding Pathways in Education.” The conference, held in Díli at the National Electoral Commission Office, was organized by the National University of Timor-Leste [UNTL] and Victoria University [VU], an Australian university based in Melbourne.

The Prime Minister noted that education and training were important to families, communities and the nation and emphasized that proper budgeting, balanced policy and quality outcomes in the sector were key to achieving the development of Timor-Leste. He pointed out the disconnect that can occur in applying learning to day-to-day living and went on to underline the importance of education in providing both broad knowledge and practical skills to prepare students for the workforce and equip them to make strong contribution to national development.

Conference organizers said the conference “examined good educational practice in Timor-Leste drawing on what is working well and reviewed what is happening in other countries in relation to finding educational pathways and opportunities for lifelong learning”. They hoped “that the conference recommendations will inform the emerging policy discussion on curriculum, teaching methods, information about educational opportunities and selection processes for courses in Timor-Leste and formulation of policies for lifelong learning.”

Interim Minister of Education H.E. Dulce de Jesus Soares contributed on behalf of the Government by giving an overview of the new curriculum for Basic Education and its approach to teacher training. Recent curriculum reform in Timor-Leste has embraced the theme of applied learning raised by the Prime Minister in its prioritization of two key principles: the curriculum must be connected to local culture and the Timorese way of life, and it must ensure the development of the whole person. Curriculum objectives include the creation of clear guides for teachers to ensure they use the most effective techniques, the use of a clear and systematic method for teaching language so that all children will learn to speak, read and write both official languages well, the encouragement of analytical thinking and an emphasis on Timorese culture and history to create a sense of nationalism and tolerance of others. Recent curriculum reforms have been driven by a predominantly Timorese team including teachers, trainers and educational consultants.



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The conference concluded on Tuesday evening with a final plenary session to discuss the findings and recommendations of the two universities, civil society and government. After over 50 different presentations and a high level of participation from UNTL professors, students and graduates, the organizers considered the event a great success and another fruitful collaboration between the two universities in a relationship that has developed over 15 years.

Spokesperson for the Sixth Constitutional Government, Minister of State Agio Pereira noted “the education sector is so important to our future that it is vital for us to do all we can to make education and training appropriate to our national context, practical in application and as effective as possible. The Ministry of Education has been active in this regard and this international conference organized by UNTL and VU has added to our thinking about teaching and learning in a positive way. The Government remains committed to the principle of our Strategic Development plan that recognizes education and training as keys to improving the life opportunities of our people and enabling them to reach their full potential.” **ENDS**



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